

What's All the Noise Over GA Airports

April 4, 2012

Florida Airport Council

Venice Municipal Airport

ESA Airports

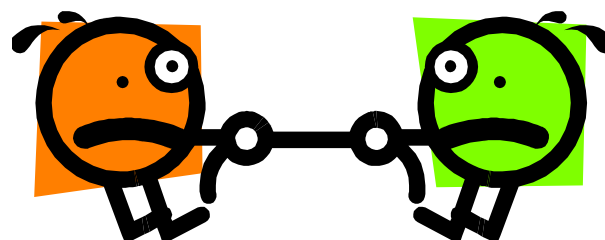


Background

- Aviation has become more compatible
 - 1975 – 7 million within 65 DNL contour
 - 2005 – 370,000 within 65 DNL contour
- 75% of complaints now from outside the 65 DNL
- FAR Part 150 Noise and Land Use Compatibility Studies - Focus on community outreach and education
- GA Activity projected to increase in FL
 - 6 million GA operations in 2011
 - 7.5 million GA operations projected in 2040



The Challenge



- Noise concerns divert focus from primary mission
- Limited resources (small staff, budget)
- Limited data (operations, types, flight paths, altitudes)
- Community perception becomes reality
- Only airport closure will satisfy some citizens
- Tenants can really help or hurt a situation
- As much as it's a science, its also an art
- Attempts to make airport compatible with adjacent land uses

Should we Respond? Why?

- Responding may help to identify trends or concerns
- Concerns do not go away by ignoring them
- Community and political pressures increase
- The potential impacts of not responding are far reaching



Understand the State of Mind

- I'm annoyed, I'm really annoyed
- You've changed something to make it louder over my home
- Why is someone else having fun at my expense?
- Fear of an aircraft accident
- That's not normal or safe
- Stop this expansion
- This is ridiculous, it's harassment
- Every airplane is louder and louder
- Someone is going to pay
- Everyone is going to hear about this
- I'm not responsible



How to Respond

- Is a response expected or needed?
- Set clear/realistic expectations
- Always follow-up on a commitment made
- Set a professional tone
- Be compassionate, neighborly and respectful
- Encourage, coach and refresh staff (Bullet point responses, senior sensitivity training)
- Perception of how loud a noise event is can drop by 10 dB if people feel they are being treated fairly

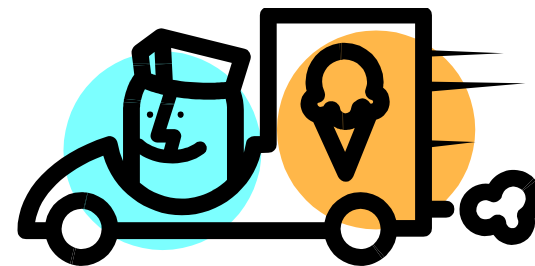
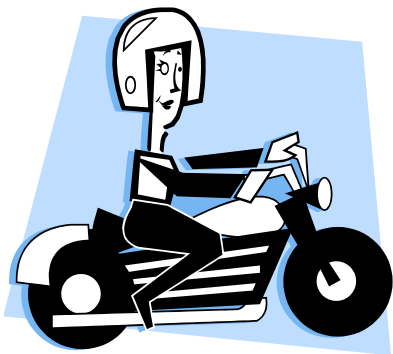


What Should be Included

- A summary of the issue and any investigation
- What should be expected going forward (i.e., is typical of activity to be expected or not typical – Be very careful here!)
- Nothing can be substituted for the facts – however, you may not have them
- Communicate in lay terms or everyday activities

Relate to Everyday Activities

- Motorcycles, lawn maintenance equipment
- Surface traffic, other community noise sources
- Keep in mind that often the simpler answer may be the better answer



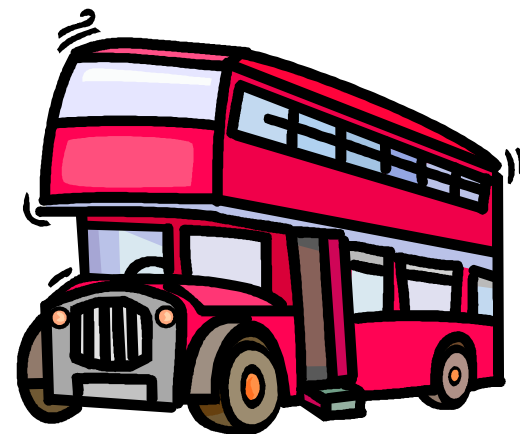
Record the Comment

- Various mechanisms for receiving comments
 - Airport Staff (Manager, Receptionist)
 - Noise Hotline, Website, E-mail
 - Elected Officials
 - Media
- The more detail about the comment the better (day, time, A/C type, caller name and address)
- Document the response



Be Proactive - Get Everyone on the Bus

- Tenants
- Media
- Public / Adjacent Neighborhoods
- Public Information Officer
- Commissioners and Board Members
- Planning and Zoning
- Chamber of Commerce/ Economic Development
- Civic Organizations
- Understand your community



Have a Good Story and Tell it Well

- What is the airport's history?
- What has the airport, tenants done to address noise concerns?
- Does planning and zoning address noise concerns?
- What type of outreach does the airport do with the local community?
- Has the airport expended time and effort to build relationships and tell your story?

Technology Can Help

The Venice Aviation Society, Incorporated



Presents

Airports are Extremely Dynamic – Understand Yours



- Operators, tenants change
- Seasonal fluctuations drive changes in runway use
- Varying activity throughout year based on:
 - Influx of seasonal residents
 - Weather conditions
 - Flight school training cycles
- Peak activity often concurrent with open windows and outdoor living

Roles and Responsibilities

- FAA/Tower – Safe and efficient operation of airspace
- Airport – Landlord of the airport responsible for management of property and facility improvements
- Pilots – Responsible for safe and efficient operation of aircraft
- Real Estate Professional – Advise home buyers on purchases
- Homeowners – Understand the dynamics of the community in which they are purchasing their home

Key Noise Considerations

- Aircraft noise is regulated by the Federal Government – not local government
- Aircraft are required to meet certain noise levels during certification
- There is no noise significance threshold for a single aircraft overflight - Noise monitoring is limited in its value
- Aircraft noise is evaluated cumulatively by all federal agencies (FAA, EPA, HUD)

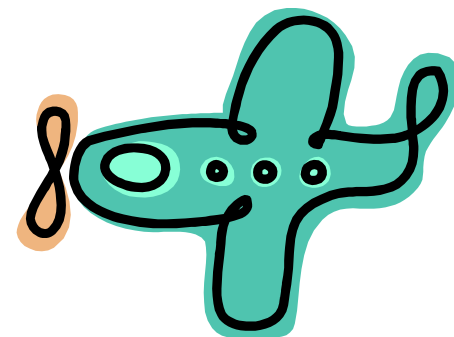


Why is 65 DNL Important

- **65 DNL and higher** = Federal government considers to be incompatible (without NLR) with residential, schools, hospitals and other noise-sensitive uses near airports. Funding and mandatory noise abatement available
- **Less than 65 DNL Contour** = federal government considers all uses compatible with airport noise
- Very few GA airports have 65 DNL contours that extend off of airport property – Usually only very busy GA airports with frequent jet activity or military aircraft
- It takes a doubling of operations with an identical fleet profile to increase noise exposure by 3 DNL

Noise Challenges at GA Airports

- Frequency of over flight by relatively “quiet” aircraft
- Contrast of aircraft types/noise levels
- Altitude of aircraft
- Concerns vary by person and aircraft type:
 - Helicopters
 - Jets
 - Training aircraft
 - Military aircraft
- When an airport has no ATC
 - Limited real data available
 - Perception pilots are breaking the rules



Be Cautious Before Modifying Operations or Traffic Patterns

- Mandatory procedures are not likely to be supported by FAA and precise voluntary procedures implemented by the airport operator may create a safety hazard
- Voluntary measures can provide significant benefit, but should be closely coordinated with FAA
- New technology is providing cost effective means to collect data and respond to concerns (flight tracking systems, aircraft counting systems)



Airports are Highly Regulated

- FAA certifies aircraft and licenses pilots
- FAA regulates airspace, airports and flight schools
- FAA sets safety standards for airport design and operations
- The State of Florida licenses airports
- Local governments are responsible for compatible land use planning

If Federally Obligated, An Airport Operator Cannot

- Close an airport
- Restrict use of an airport
- Unjustly discriminate against certain users

How Not to Respond

- Never avoid the situation
- Never say, "The airport was here first" – It's not productive and can be inflammatory
- Never take it personally or make it personal

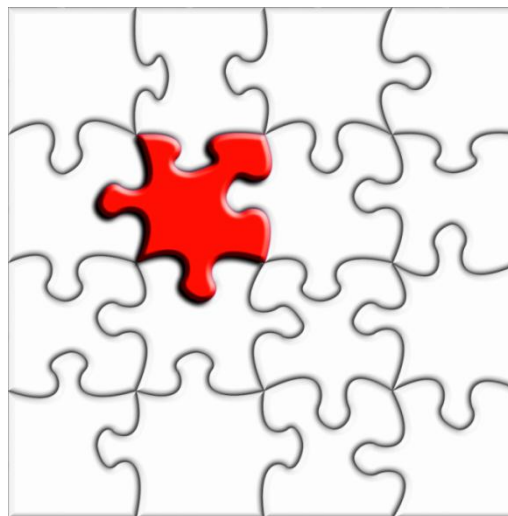
Know When to Say When

- Even when you do everything right – you can't please everyone
- Threats and harassment are often a fine line
 - Legal action (restraining order)
 - Sheriff's Department
 - FBI



Noise is Only Part of the Picture

- Noise is often times the symptom that creates awareness
- Other factors that contribute to annoyance but are not part of the noise equation
 - Safety
 - Dirt/Soot/Jet Particulate
 - Air Emissions
 - Unburned hydrocarbons
 - Lead



The Evolution of Noise Complaints

- Initially requires high level of attention, be proactive
- You must be committed to developing a relationship with the community
- Education is a must
- Over time, activities shift to a maintenance mode



Thank You!

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